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Research on Adolescent Literacy Instruction in High School

Response to Intervention: Tiered Interventions and Evidence-Based Strategies for Improving Student Outcomes in High School Summit

Ramona Chauvin, PhD
ramona.chauvin@sedl.org

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DON'T tell me that ALL teachers are teachers of reading!

I'm a _____ teacher!

(fill in the blank*)

(* Mathematics, music, social studies, science, art, literature, physical education, etc.)

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You're RIGHT!

We're NOT All Teachers of Reading…

BUT, We All Have to TEACH Students How to ACCESS, COMPREHEND, and CONSTRUCT Text!

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Research on Adolescent Literacy Instruction in High School

Objectives

1. Investigate current research on adolescent literacy instruction in high school.
2. Examine adolescent literacy instruction in the larger context of improving student learning and achievement for all students in all content areas.

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Learning Task: Word Sort

1. Work in small groups as assigned by facilitator.

2. Sort the given words in groups that share some similarity according to the following rules:
   - All words must be used.
   - A group must have at least 2 word cards/words.
   - Groups or sorts must be logical.

3. Be prepared to provide the rationale for your sort. NOTE: There isn't one "correct" way to sort. The "correctness" of your sort will be based on your rationale for the sort.

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Learning Task: Word Sort

accuracy	categorization	alliteration	comprehension	motivation
decoding	phonological awareness	fluency	word study	fix-up strategies
meaning construction	phonemic awareness	questioning	metacognition	encoding
comprehension monitoring	alphabetic principle	syllabication	identification	explicit
phonics	schema	vocabulary	think aloud	rate

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Reflecting on Ourselves as Literacy Learners

Learning Task: Think-Ink-Pair-Share

1. Think about yourself as an adult, literate learner as you respond briefly in writing to the following questions:
   - What do you know about your own reading/writing processes?
   - What do you know about how you learn best?
   - What do you know about the context or environment under which you learn best?
   - What barriers or obstacles inhibit your learning?
   - How do you eliminate or lessen these barriers?
2. Pair up with someone at your table and share a few reflections about yourself as a literate learner.
3. Be prepared to share out with the whole group, if directed.

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Reflecting on Ourselves as Literacy Learners

Why are self reflection and knowledge of our own learning processes important?

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How Well Do You (a Skilled, Proficient, Expert Reader) Comprehend Unfamiliar Text?

Learning Task: Assessing Your Own Reading

1. Skim and scan the text on the following slide for unfamiliar vocabulary.
2. Read the text focusing on the following two things;
   - Making meaning (comprehension)
   - Thinking processes or strategies used to make meaning
3. Do not shout out or share your responses until requested by the session facilitator.
4. Complete the assigned quiz as directed by the session facilitator.

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Text Excerpt for Silent Reading

NO TALKING!!!!

The Batsmen were merciless against the Bowlers. The Bowlers placed their men in slips and covers. But to no avail. The Batsmen hit one hour after another along with an occasional six. Not once did their balls hit their stumps or get caught.

Note: From *Subjects Matter* (p. 21) by H. Daniels and S. Zemelman, 2004, Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. Reprinted with permission.

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Comprehension Quiz

1. Who were merciless against the Bowlers?
2. Where did the Bowlers place their men?
3. Was this strategy successful?
4. Who hit an occasional six?
5. How many times did the Batsmen's balls hit the stump?

Note: From *Subjects Matter* (p. 22) by H. Daniels and S. Zemelman, 2004, Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. Reprinted with permission.

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Continuing Our Reading of Unfamiliar Text

Inverarity viciously pulled Brown into the gully but was sent retiring to the pavilion by a shooter from Cox. Jones in slips and Chappel at silly mid on were superb, and Daniel bowled a maiden over in his first spell. Yallop took his toll with three towering sixes but Thompson had little to do in the covers. Grant was dismissed with a beautiful Yorker and Jones went from a brute of a ball….

Note: From *Subjects Matter* (p. 25) by H. Daniels and S. Zemelman, 2004, Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. Reprinted with permission.

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Connecting Our Adult Reading Strategies to Proficient Reader Research

Proficient readers

- Activate background knowledge and make associations or connections with text
- Ask questions before, during, and after reading
- Use awareness of the purpose in reading the text, text forms and features, and then make decisions about reading rate based on this awareness
- Visualize and use sensory images and emotions
- Verify or change predictions based on the text and/or what is known about an author and his/her style

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Proficient readers also

- Read selectively, fluently, and decode rapidly
- Monitor comprehension and use “fix-up” strategies when comprehension breaks down
- Determine what is important in text, draw inferences during and after reading, and synthesize information
- Interpret text on a variety of levels (e.g., literal, interpretive, evaluative)
- Read and write a variety of text forms

(Duffy et al., 1987; Keene & Zimmerman, 1997; Paris, Cross & Lipson, 1984; Pearson, Roehler, Dole, & Duffy, 1992)

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Unfortunately, Many Students Are Not Proficient

- One in four students in grades four through twelve was a struggling reader in 2005 and fewer than one-third of public school 8th graders read at or above grade level (Perie, Grigg, & Donahue, 2005).
- Sixty-nine percent of 8th grade students fall below the proficient level in their ability to comprehend the meaning of text at grade level (Lee, Grigg, & Donahue, 2007).
- Twenty-five percent of students read below the basic level, which means they do not have sufficient reading ability to understand and learn from text at their grade level (Kamil, et al., 2008).

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Critical Components of Reading

Alphabetics
- Phonological Awareness
  - Words
  - Syllables
  - Rhymes
  - Onsets and Rimes
  - Phonemic Awareness
    - Sound Isolation
    - Sound Identification
    - Categorization
    - Blending
    - Segmentation
    - Deletion
    - Addition
    - Substitution
- Phonics
  - Letter Sound Correspondence
  - Decoding
  - Encoding

Fluency
- Rate
- Accuracy
- Expression

Comprehension
- Vocabulary
- Strategies for Reading
- Text Comprehension

Note: From the Office of the Superintendent of Public Education (OSPI), 2002, Reading LINKS: Facilitator and Participant Manuals. Olympia, WA: Links Learning. Reprinted with permission.

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ALPHABETIC PRINCIPLE

Phonological Awareness

1. Recognizing Word/Sentence Length
2. Rhyming
3. Syllabication
4. Segmenting Onset/Rime
5. Phonemic Awareness
   - Isolating Sounds
   - Identifying Sounds
   - Categorizing Sounds
   - Blending Sounds
   - Segmenting Sounds
   - Deleting Sounds
   - Adding Sounds
   - Substituting Sounds

Phonics

1. Letter/Sound Associations
2. Decoding
3. Encoding

Note: From the Office of the Superintendent of Public Education (OSPI), 2002, Reading LINKS: Facilitator and Participant Manuals. Olympia, WA: Links Learning. Reprinted with permission.

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FLUENCY

Accuracy | **Rate** | **Expression**

MULTI-TASKING

Fast Processing
- Language systems
- Punctuation
- Voice qualities

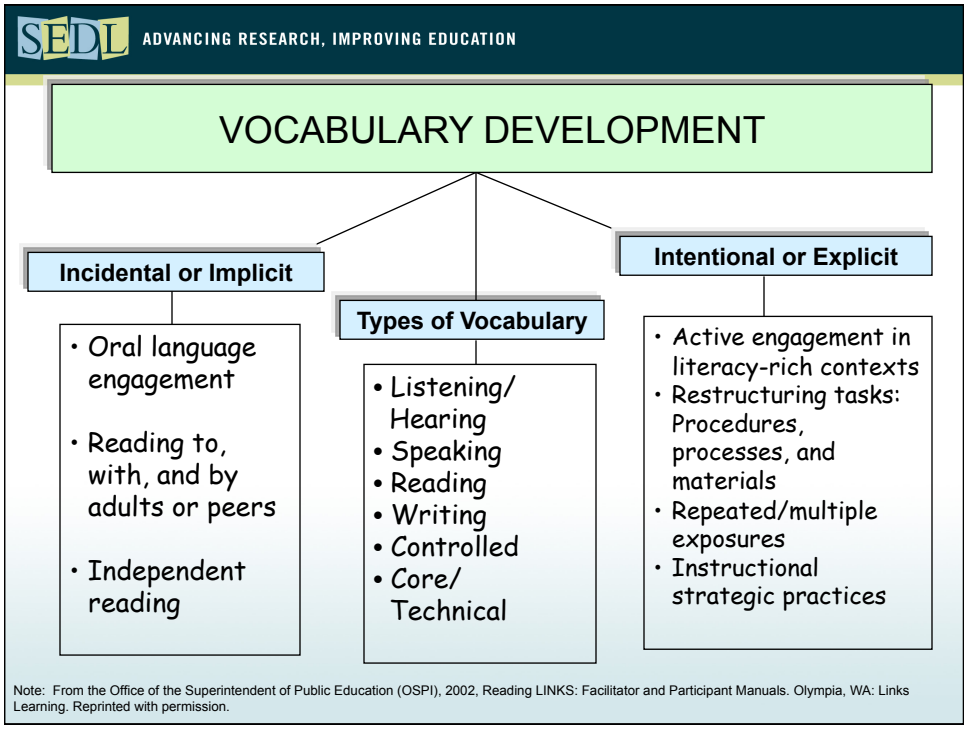
Automaticity

Pacing

Phrasing or chunking

Confirming by continuous cross-checking for meaning

Note: From the Office of the Superintendent of Public Education (OSPI), 2002, Reading LINKS: Facilitator and Participant Manuals. Olympia, WA: Links Learning. Reprinted with permission.



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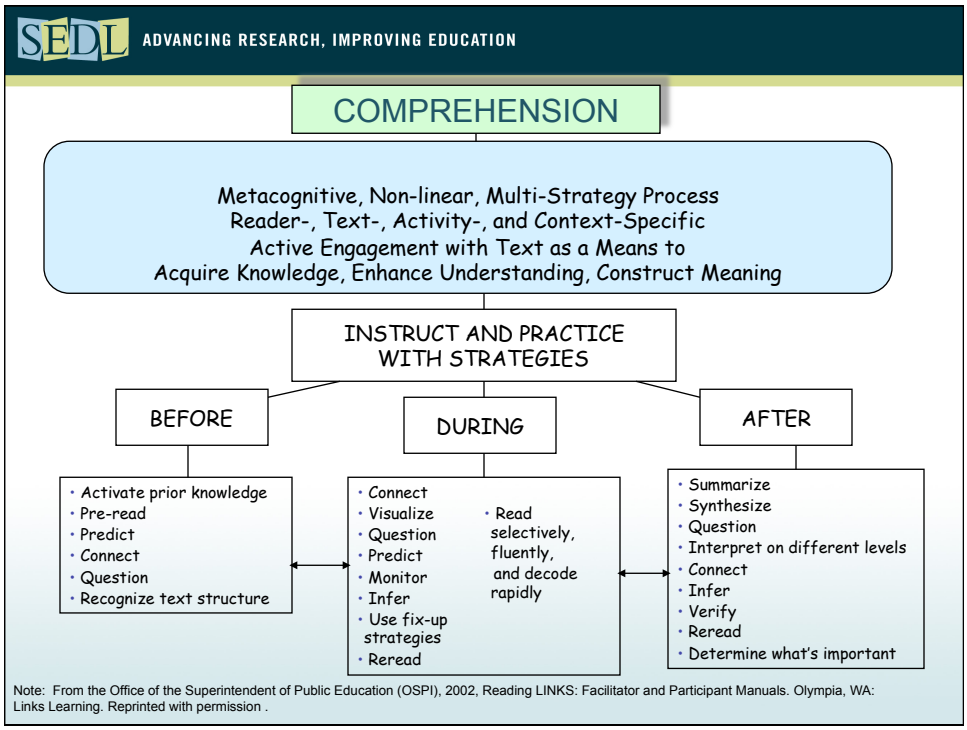

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Effective comprehension strategy instruction is **explicit.**

The teacher tells readers why and when they should use strategies, what strategies to use, and how to apply them. The steps typically include an explanation of the strategy, teacher modeling, guided practice, and application.

- **Explanation** – The teacher explains to students why the strategy helps comprehension and when to apply it.
- **Modeling** – The teacher models or demonstrates how to apply the strategy, usually by "thinking aloud" while reading text that students are using. (I DO)
- **Guided Practice** – The teacher guides and assists students as they learn how and when to apply the strategy. (WE DO)
- **Application** – The teacher helps students practice the strategy until they can apply it independently. (YOU DO in small groups; YOU DO individually)

The teacher then helps readers to use strategies flexibly and in combination with other strategies. Effective comprehension strategy instruction can also be accomplished through cooperative and collaborative learning.

(Armbruster, Lehr, & Osborn, 2001)

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Key Research

Torgesen, J.K., Houston, D.D., Rissman, L.M., Decker, S.M., Roberts, G., Vaughn, S., Wexler, J. Francis, D. J, Rivera, M.O., Lesaux, N. (2007). *Academic literacy instruction for adolescents: A guidance document from the Center on Instruction.* Portsmouth, NH: RMC Research Corporation, Center on Instruction.

Available at www.centeroninstruction.org

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Recommendations

1. Provide explicit instruction and supportive practice in the use of effective comprehension strategies throughout the school day.
2. Increase the amount and quality of open, sustained discussion of reading content.
3. Set and maintain high standards for text, conversation, questions, and vocabulary.
4. Increase students' motivation and engagement with reading.
5. Teach essential content knowledge so that all students master critical concepts.

(Torgesen et al., 2007)

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Key Research

Kamil, M.L., Borman, G.D., Dole, J., Kral, C.C., Salinger, T., & Torgensen, J. (2008). *Improving adolescent literacy: Effective classroom and intervention practices: A Practice Guide (NCEE #2008-4027).* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education.

Available at http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practiceguides/adlit_pg_082608.pdf

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Recommendations and Levels of Evidence to Support Practice

1. Provide explicit vocabulary instruction (STRONG)
2. Provide direct and explicit comprehension strategy instruction. (STRONG)
3. Provide opportunities for extended discussion of text meaning and interpretation. (MODERATE)
4. Increase student motivation and engagement in literacy learning. (MODERATE)
5. Make available intensive and individualized intervention for struggling readers that can be provided by trained specialists. (STRONG)

(Kamil, et al., 2008)

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Issues to Consider

- For many adolescent students, ongoing difficulties with reading and writing figure prominently in the decision to drop out of school (Ehren, Lenz, & Deshler, 2004).

- These indicators suggest that literacy instruction should continue beyond the elementary years and should be tailored to the more complex forms of literacy that are required of adolescent students in the middle and high school years.

But, has that really happened?

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Not yet…

Key research shows that approximately 8.7 million 4th through 12th grade students struggle with the reading and writing tasks that are required of them in school.

(Kamil, 2003)

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Key Research: Center on Instruction

Use Center on Instruction resources to build your background knowledge of reading instruction for older struggling readers.

- *Academic Literacy Instruction for Adolescents: A Guidance Document from the Center on Instruction*
- *Adolescent Literacy Resources: An Annotated Bibliography*
- *Interventions for Adolescent Struggling Readers: A Meta-analysis With Implications for Practice*
- *Effective Instruction for Adolescent Struggling Readers: A Practice Brief*
- *Adolescent Literacy Walk-Through for Principals: A Guide for Instructional Leaders*

Continue to seek out other sources of support and knowledge.
Visit www.centeroninstruction.org

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Essential Components of Reading

Elementary Level vs. Secondary Level

Component	Elementary	Secondary
Phonemic Awareness	✓	
WORD STUDY	✓	✓ (Advanced)
Fluency	✓	✓
Vocabulary	✓	✓
Comprehension	✓	✓
Motivation	✓	✓

Note: From *Effective instruction for adolescent struggling readers*, by C.S. Murray, et al., 2008, Portsmouth, NH: RMC Research Corporation, Center on Instruction. Reprinted with permission.

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Word Study

Successful Readers	Struggling Readers
Read multisyllabic words and use strategies to figure out unknown words.	Often read single-syllable words effortlessly but have difficulty decoding longer, multisyllabic words.
Make connections between letter patterns and sounds and use this understanding to read words.	May lack knowledge of the ways in which sounds map to print.
Break words into syllables during reading.	Have difficulty breaking words into syllable parts.
Use word analysis strategies to break difficult or long words into meaningful parts such as inflectional endings, prefixes, suffixes, and roots.	Often do not use word analysis strategies to break words into parts.

(Bhattacharya & Ehri, 2004; Boardman et al., 2008; Nagy, Berninger, & Abbott, 2006)

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Reasons for Word Study Difficulties

- Students might not have been effectively taught how to decode in the earlier grades.
- Students might not have been given adequate opportunities for practice.
- Students may struggle to understand letter-sound correspondences or the "rules of the English language."

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Study Findings

- Syllable training enhanced readers' decoding ability on transfer tasks.
- Syllable training enhanced readers' ability to retain spellings of words in memory.
- Whole word training was not found to help struggling readers on any of the decoding or spelling transfer tasks.

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Implications for the Classroom

There is value in teaching adolescent struggling readers to read multisyllabic words by matching syllables to pronunciations.	Instruction in word study for the weakest readers is needed as well as comprehension strategy instruction.	Authors note that the intervention could be enhanced by also teaching students information about root words and affixes, syllable types, etc.

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Conclusions About Word Study Instruction

- For adolescent readers who struggle at the word level, instruction in word study skills can improve word identification skills.
- There are a variety of instructional methods for this purpose, but most involve teaching students to decode words by recognizing syllables types or by analyzing parts of words.

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Essential Components of Reading

Elementary Level vs. Secondary Level

Component	Elementary	Secondary
Phonemic Awareness	✓	
Word Study	✓	✓ (Advanced)
FLUENCY	✓	✓
Vocabulary	✓	✓
Comprehension	✓	✓
Motivation	✓	✓

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Fluency research indicates

- Word study and comprehension are related to fluency (Shinn & Good, 1992).
- Fluency does not "cause" comprehension, but is one necessary component of successful reading (Rasinski et al., 2005).

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Fluency

Successful Readers	Struggling Readers
Read 100–160 words per minute (at the middle school level), depending on the nature and difficulty of the text.	Read slowly and laboriously.
Decode words accurately and automatically.	May continue to struggle with decoding or may decode correctly but slowly.
Group words into meaningful chunks and phrases.	May not pause at punctuation or recognize phrases.
Read with expression.	Often lack voice or articulation of emotion while reading.
Combine multiple tasks while reading (e.g., decoding, phrasing, understanding, and interpreting).	May lack proficiency in individual skills, resulting in dysfluent reading and limit comprehension.

(Boardman et al., 2008)

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Conclusions on Fluency Instruction

- The level of fluency required for secondary struggling readers to read effectively and understand text is not entirely clear.
- For some students, fluency may help build a link between decoding and comprehension, but fluency does not cause comprehension.
- Teachers should not spend a lot of time on fluency instruction and should pair it with instruction in decoding and/or vocabulary and comprehension-enhancing practices.

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Essential Components of Reading

Elementary Level vs. Secondary Level

Component	Elementary	Secondary
Phonemic Awareness	✓	
Word Study	✓	✓ (Advanced)
Fluency	✓	✓
VOCABULARY	✓	✓
Comprehension	✓	✓
Motivation	✓	✓

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Vocabulary

Successful Readers	Struggling Readers
Are exposed to a breadth of vocabulary words in conversations and print at home and at school from a very early age.	Have limited exposure to new words. May not enjoy reading and therefore do not select reading as an independent activity.
Understand most words when they are reading (at least 90 percent) and can make sense of unknown words to build their vocabulary knowledge.	Read texts that are too difficult and thus are not able to comprehend what they read or to learn new words from reading.
Learn words incrementally, through multiple exposures to new words.	Lack the variety of experiences and exposures necessary to gain deep understanding of new words.
Have content-specific prior knowledge that assists them in understanding how words are used in a particular context.	Often have limited content-specific prior knowledge that is not sufficient to support word learning.

(Boardman et al., 2008)

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Reasons for Vocabulary Difficulties

- Lack of exposure to words (through reading, speaking, and listening).
- Lack of background knowledge related to words.
- Lack of direct vocabulary instruction.

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Conclusions About Vocabulary Instruction

- A good reader uses vocabulary to foster comprehension.
- Teachers can do the following to effectively enhance students' vocabulary:
  - Promote word consciousness;
  - Use additive vocabulary instruction;
  - Use generative vocabulary instruction; and
  - Teach academic vocabulary.
- Teachers should carefully choose the type of vocabulary instruction they provide by examining the goals of their lessons.

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Phonemic Awareness	✓	
Word Study	✓	✓ (Advanced)
Fluency	✓	✓
Vocabulary	✓	✓
COMPREHENSION	✓	✓
Motivation	✓	✓

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Comprehension

Successful Readers	Struggling Readers
Continuously monitor reading for understanding.	Fail to use meta-cognitive strategies as they read. May not be aware when understanding breaks down.
Link content with their prior knowledge.	May lack subject-specific prior knowledge. Do not readily make connections between what they are learning and what they already know.
Use a variety of effective reading strategies before, during, and after reading.	Have limited knowledge and use of strategies for gaining information from text.
Set a purpose for reading and adjust their rate and strategy use depending on the text and content.	Often do not enjoy reading and lack understanding of the utility of reading.

(Boardman et al., 2008; Adapted from Denton et al., 2007; Pressley, 2006)

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Reasons for Comprehension Difficulties

- Lack of appropriate prior knowledge
- Inability to relate content to prior knowledge
- Over-reliance on background knowledge
- Inability to read text fluently
- Difficulty with decoding words
- Inability to attend to meaning while reading
- Inability to apply comprehension strategies
- Difficulty with understanding meaning of words

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Implications for the Classroom

- Implementing comprehension strategy practice within peer groups frees up the teacher for monitoring student performance.

- Teachers may want to consider comprehension instruction for a wide range of students, including those with very low reading levels.

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Fluency	✓	✓
Vocabulary	✓	✓
Comprehension	✓	✓
MOTIVATION	✓	✓

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Motivation

Successful Readers	Struggling Readers
Interact with text in a motivated and strategic way.	May engage in reading as a passive process without effortful attention given to activating prior knowledge, using reading strategies, or employing other strategic thought processes.
Have improved comprehension and reading outcomes when engaged with text.	Often have low comprehension of text.
Read more and, thus, have more access to a variety of topics and text types.	Fail to access a variety of wide reading opportunities. Given the choice, prefer not to read.
Are interested and curious about topics and content in texts and read to find out more.	May not be interested or curious to find out about topics or content by reading.

(Boardman et al., 2008)

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Instructional Practices Associated With Improved Motivation

The following four critical instructional practices can improve students' motivation.

1. Provide content goals for reading (literacy).
2. Support student autonomy.
3. Provide interesting texts.
4. Increase collaboration during reading.

(Guthrie & Humenick, 2004)

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"The idea is not that content-area teachers should become reading and writing teachers, but rather that they should emphasize the reading and writing practices that are specific to their subjects, so students are encouraged to read and write like historians, mathematicians, and other subject-area experts."

(Biancarosa & Snow, 2004, p. 15)

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Adolescent Literacy Instruction: The Big Picture

Think-Pair-Share

- How does your state department (or district, school, grade level, content area) address, link, leverage, or support implementation of the research components associated with adolescent literacy instruction in high school?
- What can you do in your role or sphere of influence to address the implementation of adolescent literacy instruction and related components for all high school students in all contents?

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For more information, contact

Ramona Chauvin, PhD
Program Associate
SEDL
3501 North Causeway Blvd., Suite 700
Metairie, LA 70002
800-644-8671
ramona.chauvin@sedl.org